

Donation Guidelines – University Archives – Student and Alumni Papers

Student and alumni papers are valuable sources for historical research. They document the experience of students at Iowa State University and the impact of an Iowa State education in the community, across the state, and the world. Student and alumni papers are an essential part of the historical record of the university and enrich this record with the unique perspectives of students. To support institutional and academic research, Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA) collects, preserves, and provides access to the papers of students and alumni with a special focus on those that strongly capture student life at Iowa State University and/or those who have made significant contributions to their respective fields after graduation. SCUA especially welcomes the papers of historically underrepresented and marginalized students and alumni.

Preparing and Donating Student and Alumni Papers

1. Clearly label physical and digital materials, including names, events, and dates. Whenever possible, please place both physical and digital files in labeled folders and physical materials in labeled record cartons (bankers boxes).
2. Create an inventory including Box, Folder, Description/Title, Dates, and Format to assist in the donation and processing of the materials. **Email a copy of the inventory to the Student Life Archivist** and place a printed copy inside each box.
3. Contact Rebecca Wells, Student Life Archivist, by email at rwells@iastate.edu or by phone at 515-294-6676 for guidance, any questions, and to arrange the delivery of the materials.

Student and alumni papers are the property of the individuals and are donated to Iowa State University by a signed Deed of Gift agreement which legally transfers ownership and rights. The Student Life Archivist will work with you to determine what rights and restrictions are appropriate for your papers.

What We Collect (in all formats, physical and digital)

Materials documenting your experience as an ISU student and your career.

- **Biographical material:** Resumes, vitae, biographical and autobiographical sketches, chronologies, genealogies, and newspaper clippings
- **Journals, diaries, appointment books/calendars, scrapbooks, and letters**
- **Course materials:** syllabi, course notes, and assignments
- **Student/Professional organization/committee/board records:** (For more information, see Donation Guidelines for Student Organization Records)
- **Student activities:** programs, posters, flyers, invitations, and tickets
- **Incoming and outgoing communications:**
 - o Academic communications with faculty, staff, administrators, fellow students, friends, and family regarding your education and life as an ISU student
 - o Professional communications with colleagues, publishers, and professional organizations regarding your work and career
- **Photographic materials:** prints, negatives, slides, and digital images documenting student life and professional activities
- **Audiovisual materials:** recordings of student life and professional activities
- **Scrapbooks and photo albums**
- **Websites and socials**

What We Do Not Collect

- **The *Bomb* yearbook** unless proven ownership by a prominent alumnus
- **Published material:** articles, monographs, unannotated copies of other scholarship (*exception for Iowa State University departmental or student organization publications like magazines, newsletters, etc.*)
- **Detailed financial records:** bank statements, receipts, canceled checks, etc.
- **Medical or legal records**
- **Multiple copies**
- **Confidential or personally identifiable information:** FERPA, HIPPA, and PII

These lists can help you identify physical and digital materials appropriate for donation to SCUA. Please consult with the Student Life Archivist for materials not listed here and for possible exceptions. For further explanation about what SCUA collects and why, please see our Collection Development Policy at <https://specialcollections.lib.iastate.edu/collections-policy>.

Artifacts/Three-Dimensional Objects

SCUA may be interested in memorabilia. However, as an archival repository and not a museum, we do not prioritize the collection of artifacts. Those that we do collect must document an important aspect of the student experience or the university's history. They must also have unique physical characteristics, hold high research value, and/or have the potential for use in exhibitions, other outreach activities, or instruction. Plaques and trophies rarely meet these characteristics.

WHEN IN DOUBT, PLEASE DO NOT THROW IT OUT! CONTACT THE STUDENT LIFE ARCHIVIST!